

BOTANY WORSTED MILLS, WASTE PICKER HOUSE
176 Parker Avenue
Passaic
Passaic County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-982-A

HABS
NJ,
116-PASA,
7-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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BOTANY WORSTED MILLS, WASTE PICKER HOUSE HABS No. NJ-982-A

- Location: 176 Parker Avenue, Passaic, Passaic County,
New Jersey
- USGS Weehawken, New Jersey Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
18.574000 -4524700
- Significance: With its "sawtooth" roofline and brick
construction, the building is a good
surviving example of an early twentieth
century industrial building. Originally part of
the Botany Worsted Mills, this building
was constructed as a waste picker house.
Botany Mills was founded in 1889 as the first
fully integrated woolen processing plant in the
United States.
- Description: Facing Parker Avenue, the building is a one-
story, nine-bay brick structure with a
"sawtooth" profile roof covered in asphalt
shingle. Skylights have been covered by
corrugated metal. Fenestration is regular,
and features two basic window types: six-over
six double-hung sash below rounded relieving
arches with stone sills, and large multipane
picture-type windows with metal frames.
Two round metal exhaust stacks project through
the roof on the southeast side of the main
facade. Overall dimensions of the building are
'90' x 225.'
- History: The buildings at 176 Parker Avenue were
originally part of Botany Worsted Mills, founded
in 1889 as the first integrated woolen
processing plant in the United States.
Representing a later period in the development
of the mill, the waste picker house was built in
stages: the western section of the building

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dates from 1910-18, while the eastern three bays were built from 1935-49. Botany Mills ceased production in 1955, after which the waste picker house was leased to a number of industrial tenants.

No information specific to the historic function of the waste picker house at Botany Mills was found. Generic sources relating to wool production in the late 19th and early 20th centuries suggest that in an integrated processing plant like Botany Mills wool came to the factory in a raw state, where it was then washed, scoured, separated and sorted by length before spinning, dyeing and weaving could take place. Presumably waste picking was a cleaning/sorting stage in the beginning of the wool production process. No material evidence, mechanical or architectural, remains to clarify the historic function of the waste picker house.

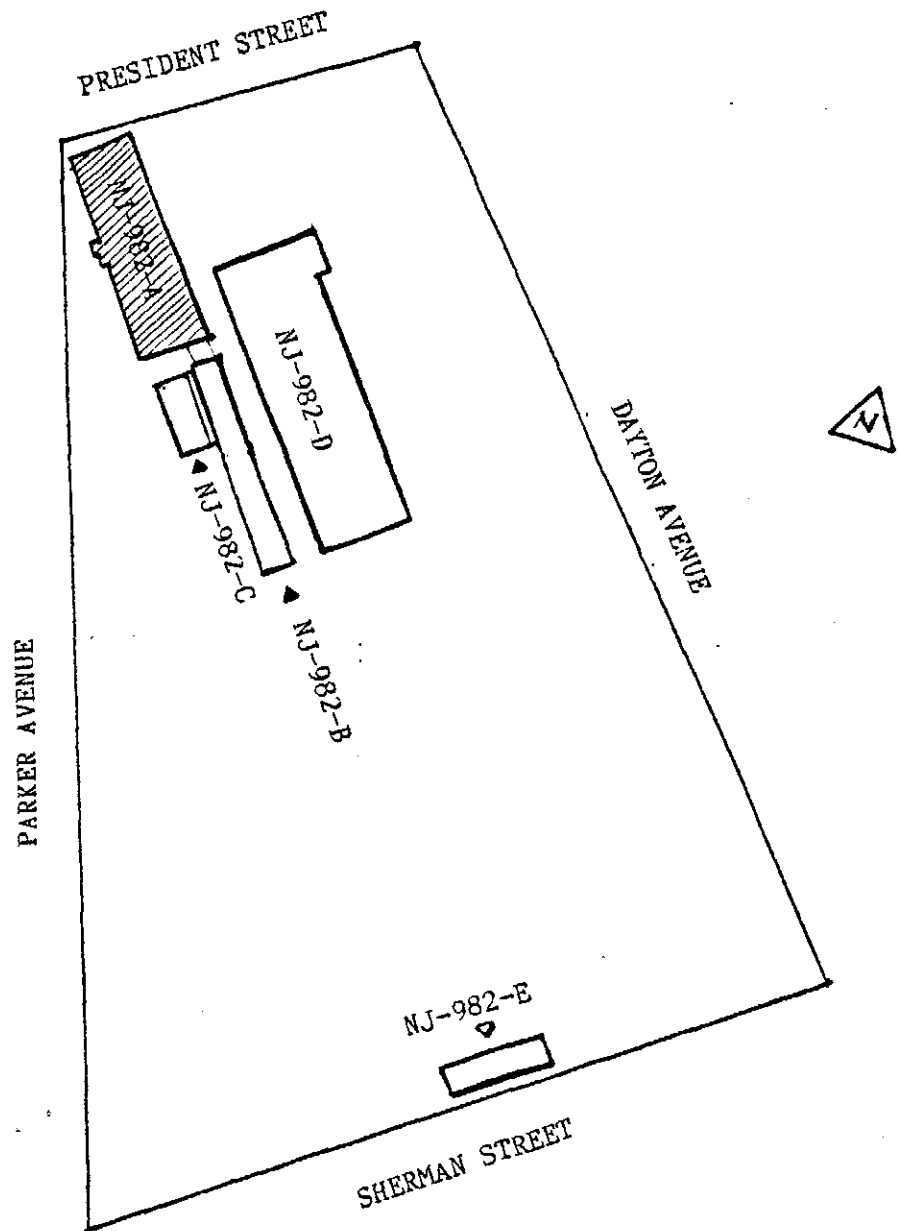
Sources:


Sanborn Insurance Maps, City of Passaic, 1918 and 1935; Passaic Final Environmental/Historical Impact Study (Joan Geismar, 1987)

Historian:

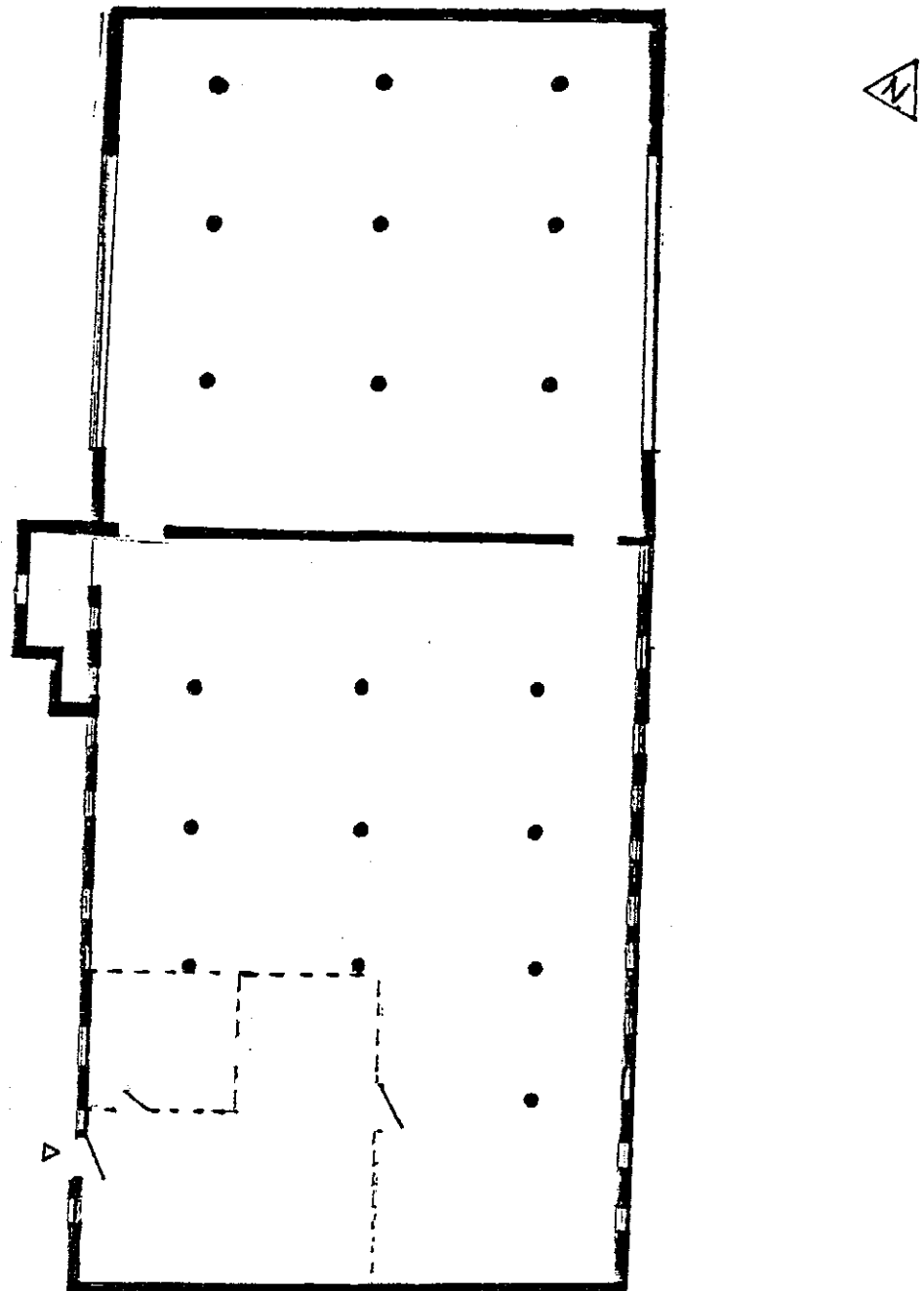
Sally Milner, ACROTHERION, 71 Maple Avenue,
Morristown, NJ, December 1989

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 =subject property
(not to scale)

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(not to scale)